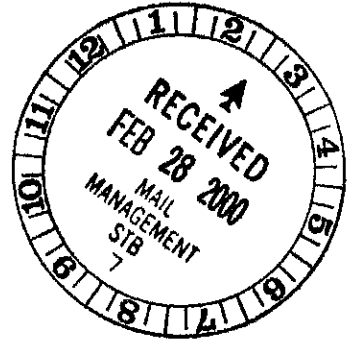




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February 24, 2000

Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary
Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Office of the Secretary
FEB 29 2000
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Public Record

Dear Sir:

Central State Enterprises, Inc. is a grain merchandising and export company that is a major user of rail service in the United States. We ship 50 and 100 car unit trains of corn, wheat and soybeans to the domestic southeast as well as export through New Orleans, Louisiana. We primarily use the CN/IC and the Norfolk Southern as our railroad carriers. We are one of the largest shippers on the Norfolk Southern as well as a major customer for the CN/IC. Central States Enterprises, Inc. would like to comment on the issues that are to be discussed on March 8, 2000 in Ex Parte 582.

We feel the CN-BNSF combination should be judged on its merits and whether it is good for shippers. The same goes for other railroads proposing mergers. Public interest must be protected and we feel it will be as long as the Surface Transportation Board fairly evaluates the CN-BNSF combination and ensures that service will be delivered.

Sincerely,

Ken R. Cupples
Vice President Marketing

KRC:lmc

CENTRAL STATES ENTERPRISES, INC

300 International Parkway • Heathrow, FL 32746 • 407-333-3503 • Fax 407-333-2022